RBR
T246F

A Few

Neceſſary Queſtions & Concluſions

for the preſent Pariſh-Teachers of

ENGLAND,

&c.

Deeply to Ponder and Anſwer in God's Fear, for the Good of their own and the Peoples Souls that are under them; for the Lord is ariſen to call all things into Judgment.

1. WHether any can be ſaid to be true Goſpel-Miniſters, who are not ſent of Chriſt, as Chriſt was ſent of the Father, ſeeing Chriſt ſaid, *As my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you; for all Power is given me in Heaven and Earth?* Joh. 20. 21. & 17. 18. Mat. 28. 18.

2. Whether any can be juſtly blamed for not hearing or upholding ſuch as are not thus ſent of Chriſt, ſeeing Chriſt ſaid, *My Sheep hear my Voice, and a Stranger they will not follow, for they know not the Voice of a Stranger,* Joh. 10. 1 Joh. 4.

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3. VVhe-

3. Whether it be not the greateſt Preſumption for any, upon what Pretence ſoever, to take upon them to be Embaſſadors for Chriſt (the great King) who were never authorized or commiſſionated thereto by Chriſt, as aforeſaid, it being his proper Right to ſend forth his own Labourers?

4. Whether any who are not thus ſent of Chriſt, as Chriſt was ſent of the Father, can profit the People at all, though they have never ſo much Authority from Man, or be furniſhed with never ſo much Oratory, or Wiſdom of Words, or Excellency of Speech, according to Man, ſeeing the Scripture teſtifieth, *The World by Wiſdom knew not God*? 1 Cor. 1.

And if any ſhould ſay, *How was Chriſt ſent, or can any be ſent now as Chriſt was ſent*? I anſwer, Chriſt was ſent in the Wiſdom, Power and Spirit of the endleſs Love and Life of the Father, to preach the Kingdom of God, and the everlaſting Goſpel thereof, as it's ſaid, *Luke* 4. 18. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he hath anointed me to preach the Goſpel to the poor, &c.* and ſo were the true Miniſters formerly ſent of Chriſt, *Luke* the laſt 49. *Acts* 26. 16, 17. *Acts* 20. 28. *Joh.* 16. 13, 14, 15. 2 *Cor.* 3. 5, 6. And as in all former Ages all the true Meſſengers and Miniſters of God and Chriſt were ſent in the VViſdom, Power and Spirit of God and Chriſt, and thereby directed and guided in their Work, both when, to whom and what to ſpeak, *Jer.* 17. *&c. Ex.* 3. 10. *&c. Amos* 7. 14. 16. *Acts* 10. 19, 20. *Acts* 8. 26, 27, 29. 1 *Cor.* 2. 12, 13. *Gal.* 2. 7, 8. Even ſo are Chriſt's true Meſſengers and Miniſters ſent now, and alwayes muſt be

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becauſe without Chriſt they can do nothing, *Joh.* 15.5. and becauſe no Man knows the Things of God, but the Spirit of God; and therefore without that Spirit it muſt needs be impoſſible for any, either rightly to know or miniſter the Things of God, 2 *Cor.* 2.7. &c. and ſo ſaith Chriſt, *I am with you* (not ſome, but all my Servants) *Joh.* 17.20, 21, 22. (not for a time only, but alwayes) *even to the End of the world*, Mat. 28.20. And therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *How can they preach, except they be ſent* (to wit, as Chriſt was, *Luke* 4 18. *&c.*) as is plain by the Apoſtle's applying that in general to Chriſt's Miniſters, which the Prophet ſpeaks in the ſingular number of Chriſt, *Rom.* 10.15. compared with *Iſa.* 52.7. Again, Chriſt was ſanctified and ſent, ſo are alſo his Meſſengers and Miniſters ſanctified, & ſent as Lambs among Wolves, *Joh.* 17.16, 17, 18, 19. &c. *Iſa.* 6.7, 8. Let no unſanctified man here ſhelter himſelf under *Judas*, who was only for the turn of fulfilling the Scripture numbred amongſt the twelve, but not at all for a Pattern of true Goſpel-Miniſters. Again, Chriſt came not to do his own Will, but the Will of him that ſent him; and ſo it is with every one that Chriſt ſends, and who abide in his Doctrine; and as Chriſt endured the Contradiction of Sinners againſt himſelf with all Patience, even ſo do all he ſends, and who abide in his Doctrine, not avenging themſelves, but committing their Cauſe to God, who is the Avenger of all Wrongs done to his Servants: Alſo ſeeing Chriſt ſaid, *The Tree is known by its Fruits*, and by their Fruits ye may know ſuch as come to you in Sheeps Cloathing

ing, but are inwardly ravening VVolves, *Mat.*7.15. Therefore is is further asked of you,

1. VVhether ſuch as love to be called of men *Maſter*, which Chriſt forbad, *Mat.* 23. 10, 11, 12. or ſeek and affect other Titles of worldly Honour, and to be great, and to exerciſe Lordſhip in the Earth, like the *Gentiles*, do not plainly manifeſt themſelves to be ſuch as Chriſt is not with, ſeeing he ſaid to his, *It ſhall not be ſo amongſt you*, Mark 10. 24. &c. *And how can they believe* (ſaith Chriſt) *who receive Honour one of another, and ſeek not that Honour which comes from God, only?* Joh. 5. 44.

2. Whether ſuch as make Merchandize of their Words, even ſelling them as it were for Money, by agreeing with the People for ſo much a Year, to ſettle at a Place for preaching, &c. and yet will not ſettle at a Place as Teachers, but where they know beforehand ſo much Hire or certain yearly Maintenance provided for them, ſeconded with the worldly Power, to compel People to pay it them, or by Force to take it from them, whether they will or no? I ſay, is not this a manifeſt Token that ſuch Miniſters are not ſent of Chriſt, ſeeing he ſaid to his, *Freely ye have received, freely give*; and the Apoſtle ſaid, *we ſeek not yours, but you*? but if you ſay, the ſame Apoſtle alſo ſaid, *If we have miniſtred to you ſpiritual Things, is it a great Matter if we partake of your carnal Things*?

3. Then I query (to let paſs the Queſtion here concerning what you miniſter, whether it is ſpiritual or carnal) whether ever the Apoſtle or any true Miniſter of God and Chriſt, either under the Law or Goſpel

ſpel did ever uſe any other Means for that they had allowed them of God, but the Power of the VVord only? Or did ever the Apoſtle, or any Miniſter of Chriſt receive, much leſs compel by worldly Force, any Maintenance for preaching from ſuch as denyed them to be true Miniſters? And ſo ſuch now as not only compel Wages from their own Hearers, but even from ſuch as they do no Work for, do plainly manifeſt by their Fruits that they have run, & God never ſent them, and are ſo far from being Succeſſors of the Apoſtles in their ſpiritual and heavenly Miniſtry, as that they merit to be accounted of the Kind of old *Eli*'s Sons, who by their Doings cauſed the Offerings of the Lord to be abhorred, 1 *Sam.* 2 from ver. 12. to 18.

4. Whether ſuch as cannot content themſelves with the In-comes of one Pariſh, though it be ſixty, eighty or one Hundred Pounds a Year, but ſeek after one or more Pariſhes or Places of Revenue beſides, are not out of Meaſure covetous, and ſo palpably out of the Doctrine of Chriſt, and ſo Idolaters, ſeeing the Apoſtle ſaith, *Covetouſneſs is Idolatry*? Epheſ. 5. 5.

5. Whether did ever any Miniſter of Chriſt's ſending preach up the Tenth of Peoples Labour, or Encreaſe of the Earth and earthly things, as a ſtanding Goſpel-maintenance for his Miniſters, ſeeing the Apoſtles VVritings are wholely ſilent in the thing? And now if any of you in your high Minds think much or ſtrange to be queſtion'd concerning theſe things, ſuch may know that theſe are the latter Dayes, ſpoken of by *Jeremiah*, *Chap.* 23. 20, 21. wherein God hath done and is doing great things for his People;

And

And in the latter Dayes (saith the Prophet there) *you shall consider perfectly of the pouring forth of God's Wrathful Indignation upon the false Prophets and Teachers, who have run, and God never sent them*, as also throughout that whole 23d Chapter of *Jeremiah* is to be seen: also concerning the false Prophets and Teachers you may read *John* 10.1. *&c. Isa.* 56.9. *&c. Ezek.* 34.1. *Mic* 3. 2 *Pet.* 2. with divers other Scriptures, which speak of the false Prophets and Teachers, also of the true ones; from all which these few (amongst many plain & necessary Conclusions) following may be gathered, *viz.*

1. The true Prophet, Messenger or Teacher is sent of God (as before) in the Power and Spirit of God, with the living VVord of God, which is as a Hammer and a Fire, to break the hard Hearts in sunder, and to burn up the Chaff and Dross in the Minds of disobedient People, who know God's VVill, but do it not, but hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.

The false Prophet or Teacher, *he runs in his own Will, & having stoll'n the Word from his Neighbour, useth his Tongue to say, the Lord saith, when the Lord never sent him, & so with good Words & fair Speeches deceives the Hearts of the unwary Hearers, making glad the Hearts of Hypocrites, & crying Peace, when the Lord hath not spoken it.*

2. The true Prophet, Teacher or Minister, as he hath received freely, so he ministers freely; but the false Teacher, as he runs in his own VVill, so he ministers for a Self-End, and if *People put into his Mouth, he cryes Peace. but if otherwise, he prepares War against them, & out of his corrupt Heart cryes, Give, & can never have enough.*

3. The true Minister hath a Mouth alwayes open for God, and against Sin and Evil in every Appearance of it, without Respect of Persons, and like a true

true Watcher gives notice of the Wolf's Approach, and doth not flee when the Wolf comes, but oppoſes him in the Loſs of all, becauſe Chriſt's Sheep are dear to him: But the Hireling fleeth, becauſe he is a Hireling, and careth not for the Sheep; and as concerning Sin, it may live in People forever for him, for he cannot bark againſt Sin, he is ſo full of it himſelf; for how can he that is an unclean, covetous, proud Perſon himſelf (with a Face) ſtand againſt ſuch Sins in others; nay, nay, the barking of ſuch muſt needs be againſt ſuch as do from the Heart depart from Iniquity, and ſo ſeparate from ſuch as live in it, according to the Call of the Lord.

4. The true Prophet, Miniſter or Teacher fights the good Fight of Faith, and his Weapons are ſpiritual, and not carnal, and ſo he fights not with Fleſh and Blood, to deſtroy Mens Perſons, Liberties or Eſtates, but his War is with the wicked Devil (the Power of Darkneſs in men) that ſeparates mens minds, Hearts and Souls from God, and brings them into Sin's Captivity, and ſo under God's Wrath; and ſo the true Miniſter's Work is to preach People out of that woful Condition into the Liberty of the Sons of God: But the falſe Teacher or Miniſter hi Weapons are carnal, and he runs to the worldly Powers to help him againſt ſuch as oppoſe his evil Doctrine and Practice, crying, *Men of* England, *&c. help,* as the *Jews* cryed out againſt *Paul*, *Men of* Iſrael *help*, and ſo matter not though they weary the Magiſtrate, and ſet all the World in an Uproar, to keep themſelves up in their high Places of Deceit, and ſo prove the greateſt Enemies againſt God's Truth and his Servants of all other, as is abundantly to be ſeen in Scripture,

ture, concerning the Priests and their Confederates, who persecuted Christ to Death, and raged against his Followers, because of their holy Testimony for God against their Soul-destroying Wayes.

5. The true Messengers and Ministers of Jesus Christ, as they are powerfully sent of God, so they work effectually for God, for the edifying of the Body of Christ, and perfecting of his People in Holiness to God: But the false Teacher, as he hath run without God, so his Work is for strengthning that Part in man (to wit, the Serpents Wisdom) which is against God, and wars against the Simplicity of Christ and Good of the Soul in all; and so they being themselves out of that heavenly Power which perfects the Soul to God, and gives it perfect Victory over all Sin, they cry, *No Perfection here, no perfect Victory over Sin on this Side the Grave; and so they lead about a People laden with Sin and Lust silly, as Woman in the Transgression, ever learning, and never able by their Means to come to the Knowledge of the Truth it self, which sets the Soul free from all Sin*; for how should People ever come to the Knowledge of the Truth by following such Teachers as are out of the Truth; *for if the Blind lead the Blind, must they not both fall into the Ditch?*

Also seeing you profess the Scripture, and not *unwritten Traditions* to be your Rule, and would have people to believe, *that what you do is according to Scripture*, therefore it s demanded in a few Words further,

1. What Scripture have you for your *Sprinkling of Infants*, and *Signing them with the Sign of the Cross*, and

and telling people, *That thereby they are made Members of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*, when in your own *Catechism*, in Contradiction to your practice you teach, *That Children by Reason of their Infancy or tender Years then cannot perform the Requests of Baptism, to wit, Faith and Repentance?*

2. And what Scripture have you for your Sureties (so called) which you most unscripturally call the Childrens *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, which you pretend to make up the Defect in the Infants, by and for putting these Pretended Sureties upon such bold Undertakings and unadvised Promisings of that for the Child which they never yet did for themselves, nor indeed have Faith to believe that so great Works can be done in any upon Earth, to wit, *to forsake the Devil and all his Works, &c.* seeing that such generally hold, *That none can live without Sin*; Is not Sin the Devil's Work? yea, yea; and is there any Undertaker for man to God-ward, but Christ? and was there ever any Surety betwixt God and Man, but Christ only, who saith, *Without me ye can do nothing*? so then this evil Custom of your undertaking being derogatory to the Honour of Christ, who can say that God hath required it at your Hands? but if you will yet plead for it, shew us your Scripture for it, if you would be esteemed to act as *Protestants*, and not as *Papists*, and to own Scripture above mens Inventions and Traditions.

3. Also what Scripture have you for your *Surplice, Canonical Coats, Typpets, &c.* and for wearing *Black* ra-

rather then other Colours, seeing the Apostle blamed such as placed Religion in *Dayes, Meats, and the like*; surely he would not agre with such as place their Religion in Garments and Colours; blessed be the Lord whose Day is dawned, which makes all things manifest, and none will hate the Light of it but Evil-doers.

4. And what Scripture have you for your *Tythes, Easter-reckonings, Mortuaries*, and the like, now under the Gospel, and for your Laws, which you call spiritual, to compel the People to pay you them, seeing Christ is come, the End of that Levitical Priesthood, under which Tythes were payable by a Law?

5. What Scripture have you, who profess your selves to be *Christians* for your *Swearing*, swearing in your Courts, (so called) swearing in your *Spiritual Courts*, (so called)? the poor people called *Church-wardens* groan under the Burden of this evil Custom; O this is far from following Christ, who said and saith unto his, *Swear not at all*; but you are grown to that pass, that you cannot trust one another without Swearing, no not in your Church-matters; is not this a Fruit of Apostacy, and departing from that ancient Faith which was once delivered to the Saints?

6. And what Scripture have you for giving *David*'s Prayers, Prophecyings, Roarings, Quakings, Tremblings and Confessions in *Rhyme* and *Meeter* to the World to sing, who are of another Spirit then *David* was, and so utterly unacquainted with *David*'s Conditions; and so instead of singing with the Spirit and Understanding, as the ancient *Christians* did, you sing in a Form without the Power, thereby not honouring

nouring, but rather dishonouring the Lord, who is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in Spirit and Truth?

7. And what Scripture have you for teaching People to worship one another, and for your *Ring* in Marriage, where you teach them to say (*with this Ring I thee wed, and with my Body I thee worship*) Is not God alone to be worshipped? how then are such to be accounted Christian Ministers, who abide not in his Doctrine? 2 *John* 9.

And lastly seeing you pretend to be Christ's Ministers, and so God's Free men, I ask you these few plain Questions further, *Gal.* 1. 10. *viz.*

1. Why do you limit your selves, or suffer others to limit you to such and such Forms of Words, and Gestures, and Apparel, as is in Use amongst you in all your Services? is it from any Excellency you see in those Words or Forms more then in any other? or is it because you are so weak of Judgment, or brittle of Memory, as that you can do little without Book? or is it not rather for filthy Lucre sake you are willing to be so ty'd, because you know that without Conformity to the Wills of the great Ones in this Matter, you can get no Power to compel Peoples earthly things from them? O what will not the Love of Money compel covetous minded People unto! 2 *Tim.* 6. 10, 11.

2. What is it that makes you go to the Bishop, rather then any other Man or Men for Ordination? (as you call it) Is it because you know or believe that he is more holy then any other? or hath more Power to confer any spiritual Gift upon you by Imposition of his Hands more then any other? If you say, he hath, where had he it? and wherein doth it appear? or is it not rather that you go now to the Bishop for Ordination, as you or your Brethren went formerly to the *Classical Presbytery* (so called) in *Oliver*'s time, because this is the Way now, as the other was formerly, to impower you to come into Parishes, & be

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their Teachers, and command their earthly things from them by Force, whether you do any ſpiritual Work for them or no? yea, from ſuch as in the Lord's Light ſee you to be no Miniſters of the Spirit, and therefore not able to miniſter ſpiritual things and therefore deny you: Oh that ever ſuch a thing ſhould be among ſuch as profeſs to be Goſpel Miniſters.

3. Whether do you believe that all things in the Church ought to be done and ſpoken in the alone Power and Spirit of the Lord Jeſus? and if ſo, then how can you expect but that *God will overturn, overturn all Things, until he (to wit, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to whom all Power in Heaven and Earth is given) comes to rule in all and over all, to whom of Right it belongs:* So be it.

And what is the Cauſe that you are ſo dark in your Minds, as concerning the Myſtery of Chriſt's Kingdom, and the ſpiritual ſaving Power thereof, if it be not that mentioned in the third Chapter of *Micah's* Prophecy, verſe 5,6,7. where it is written, *Thus ſaith the Lord concerning the Prophets that make my People err, that bite with their Teeth, and cry Peace, and he that putteth not into their Mouthes, they even prepare War againſt him; therefore Night ſhall be unto you, that you ſhall not have a Viſion, and it ſhall be dark unto you, that you ſhall not divine, and the Sun ſhall go down over the Prophets, and the Day ſhall be dark over them; then ſhall the Seer be aſhamed, and the Diviners be confounded; yea, they ſhall all cover their Lips, for there is no Anſwer of God.*

So be not proud, for the Lord hath ſpoken, but ſee in the Dread and Fear of God how you can acquit your ſelves from the Charge againſt falſe Prophets and Teachers mentioned in this Paper, and more abundantly in the Scriptures; *for if you be found in their Sins, how can ye eſcape their Plagues,* Rev. 18.4. *For Wo will be to them that ſeek deep to hide their Counſel from the Lord, and their Works are in the dark, and they ſay, who ſeeth us, and who knoweth us*; ſee *Iſa.* 29. from ver. 10. to ver. 16. Read, and conſider, and be wiſe for your Souls.

From one who travails for the Proſperity of Sion, Tho. Taylor.